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ABSTRACT

Black professionals are not playing significant roles as recipients of grants from the federal government. In addition, blacks are not adequately represented in those disciplines which receive the greatest share of research support. The funding process at the federal level is dominated by white males who control the administrative positions, as well as the initial review committees. Most of the funded research on the black family is still under the control of white scientists. A major criticism of this research is that it tends to focus on pathology rather than strengths. It also tends to assume a uniformity of the black experience. Although not related specifically to black researchers, sixteen major reasons why research grant applications are turned down are provided. It is urged that black scientists and practitioners submit research proposals, and a series of suggestions for potential applicants are provided. The paper concludes with suggestions for future direction in family research in reference to the protection of human subjects, the significance of family or social indicator research, the needs for studies of children and families in natural settings, the development of social policies which are reflective of a pluralistic society, and the need to develop a comparative approach to family research within the context of black communities. (Author/AM)

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THE POLITICS OF FUNDING RESEARCH ON BLACK FAMILIES: GENERATING NEW FUNDING AND ILLUMINATING NEW CONCEPTS

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I. Introduction

Although my topic, "The Politics of Funding Research on Black Families: Generating New Funding and Illuminating New Concepts", is broad or rather general, the following objectives should set some limits on my presentation. I plan

- to discuss the relative significance of social research as a major industry,
- to critically examine the structure of the funding process at the federal government level,
- to review needs assessment with special reference to theoretical training and research concerns of the Black community,

- to identify some emerging issues and concepts in Black family research.

There is a serious problem in defining what is a family and what is family research. For the moment, I will accept Amidei's and Oom's (1976, p. 2) definition which is "A family is any group of persons with a legal or biological relationship". Applying this definition, one can imagine the range of programs and issues which impact on the family. Research is basically a systematic process of seeking answers to a problem. Hence, family research is concerned with seeking answers to problems confronting families. There are many agencies and organizations which have an interest in the family. Therefore, we must further limit our analysis. We will exclude state and local governmental and private funding agencies from this analysis.

II. Social Research as a Major Industry

We will concentrate on the federal government. In 1976, it was estimated that $356.0 million was spent by the federal government on social science research (National Science Foundation, 1975, p. 38). In a comprehensive study by the Committee on Social Sciences in the National Science Foundation (1976, p. 11), it was estimated that in 1975, $475 million was obligated

for social and behavioral science by the federal government. The category of behavioral and social sciences includes the disciplines of psychology, anthropology, economics, history, linguistics, political science, law, sociology, and socioeconomic geography. Of this $475 million, $129.5 million was spent on basic research while $345.5 million was allocated to applied research. The four largest federal agencies which supported social and behavioral science research in 1975 are (1) Department of Health, Education and Welfare ($186.1 million); (2) Department of Agriculture (452.6 million); (3) Department of Defense ($51.6 million); and (4) National Science Foundation ($51.6 million).

From a historical perspective, federal government support for social science research has doubled from $166 million in the fiscal year FY 1966 to $356 million in 1976 (National Science Foundation, 1975, p. 38). Moreover, in this ten-year period, the social science share of all federal support has risen from 3.1 percent to 4.3 percent. During the 1966-1976 decade, the average annual growth rate for federally funded social science research was 7.9 percent (National Science Foundation, 1975, p. 38). While federal support for social science research has increased, it is rising at a slow

rate or pace. Federal support for social science research varies according to the discipline and the agency sponsoring the research. For example, The Department of Health, Education and Welfare (DHEW) is the chief agency supporting research in the social and behavioral sciences which tends to have a major focus on the family, including the Black family.

In a preliminary review of federal programs which impact on families, Amidei and Ooms (1976), from 15 federal departments and administrations, identified 278 programs, and less than half of them are found in DHEW. These programs had over $100 million for the fiscal year 1976 (see Table I). In limiting our analysis to DHEW, we still have a massive problem; for in this agency, there are 129 programs with a family focus. In another analysis of child and maternal health programs sponsored by the federal government, Hersh (1976) identified 106 such programs. He concluded (p. 7):

> These (programs) are found within five distinct executive departments. Within these departments, the programs are scattered over 15 agencies, 45 offices, bureaus or institutes.... These 106 programs expend at least 32 billion dollars a year of which only 2.2 billion are specifically involved in actual health services for children and their mothers. The 196 programs are based on 58 pieces of legislation. These pieces of legislation have passed through almost 30 congressional committees and subcommittees.

TABLE I

NUMBER OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS WHICH HAVE DIRECT IMPACT ON FAMILIES - 1976

	Number of Programs	Family Mentioned In Objectives In Catalog	Over $100 Million For Fiscal Year 1976
DHEW	129	19	24
Health	(27)	(5)	(5)
Education	(67)	(3)	(7)
Welfare	(27)	(7)	(9)
Office of Secretary	(8)	(4)	(3)
Veterans Administration	29	-	14
Housing & Urban Development	23	18	7
Department of Labor	21	1	5
Department of Agriculture	19	6	7
Department of Justice	15	-	2
Depatment of Interior/ Bureau of Indian Affairs	13	2	1
ACTION	9	-	-
Civil Service Commission	6	-	-
Community Services Administration	6	2	1
Department of Treasury	1	-	-
Department of Transportation	1	-	-
Railway Retirement Board	1	7	1
President's Commission on Employment of Handicapped	1	-	-
National Labor Relations Board	1	-	-
Total	278	49	64

Note: Several departments were omitted. Among them are Department of State and Commerce, Environmental Protection Agency, Emergency Research & Development, Postal Service, Customs, and the various regulatory agencies.

Source: Nancy Amidei and Theodora Ooms, "Inventory of Federal Programs", Family Impact Seminar, Institute for Educational Leadership (Washington, D. C.: George Washington University, November, 1971), p. 3.

One can get the impression that there is no public family policy (Kamerman and Kahn, 1976; Johnson, 1976). One can speculate that there are massive overlaps, lack of coordination, and perhaps resistance to change on the part of the federal government in dealing with child and family activities. The data in Table I suggest we also see that the monetary resources are substantial for family related projects. We should be concerned with the ways that these federal funds are distributed and allocated for family research.

The DHEW agency is rather large, for you have agencies such as the Office of Child Development, Office of Human Development, Office of Education, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and National Institute of Drug Abuse, which have interests in the family, children and youth. It will be necessary for me to limit this presentation to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH).

According to the most recent data, NIMH has increased its total resources spent for children and youth (the family) from 9.2 percent of the total budget in 1970 to 17.1 percent in 1976 (Hersh, 1976, p. 1). This increase for family activities is significant, given the assaults or attacks on the agency during the

Nixon and Ford administrations (Brown, 1976). The Carter administration has shown some interest in both mental health and family issues. By looking closer at the data, one can find that of a budget of $418.589 million, only $71.864 million, or 17.1 percent of the total budget, was spent on child/family mental health. However, it should be noted that of the $74.676 million spent by NIMH for extramural research, $21.006 million or 28.1 percent of the total was spent for child mental health. But this was only 4.78 percent of the NIMH budget (see Table II). Also, the same amount of funds was spent for training and child mental health ($20,074 million). The data point to the fact that there are significant research services and training funds for family projects.

III. The Funding Process

I have clearly demonstrated that, at least at NIMH, there is a substantial research budget. The important question is who gets these funds? In general, the major elements in the research funding process for NIMH include (a) the NIMH administrators, (b) the review committee, and (c) the principal investigators. I shall explain each of these elements plus the reasons why projects which are rejected for these issues are very much related to the politics of funding family research.

TABLE II

FISCAL YEAR 1976 FUNDS IDENTIFIABLE AS SPENT FOR CHILD AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH ACTIVITIES
(Thousands of Dollars)

	Total Appropriation	Amount Spent on Child Mental Health	Percent of Total Child Mental Health
Community Programs[1]	$215,185	$26,322[2]	12.2%
Extramural Research	74,676	21,006	28.1%
Intramural Research	21,054	2,292	10.9%
Training	85,100	20,074	23.6%
Management & Information[3]	22,574	2,170	9.6%
Total	$418,589	$71,864	84.4%

(1) Community Mental Health Centers Program

(2) Includes only portion identified with continuation of the old part of grant

(3) Salaries, phones, travel, conferences, contracts, publications, public relations.

Source: S. P. Hersh, Child and Youth Activities of the National Institute of Mental Health, 1976, presented to the National Advisory Mental Health Council, December 7, 1976, p. 2.

A. The Administrators

Although many NIMH administrators will say that they have little influence over policy, the direction of their programs, or who gets grants, this is not the case. The administrators write up program statements, prepare forward plans, solicit proposals, give technical assistance, recommend people for the review committees, and have personal and professional relationships with committee members, etc. Therefore, we ask, who are these administrators? They represent a range of academic disciplines and specialized skills (DHEW, 1976, p. 3). I have identified 22 top NIMH administrators who had significant influence over the funding of projects in 1976. Of this number, three or 13.6 percent were females, and 19 or 86.4 percent were males. So far, I have been able to identify only four minorities (three Blacks and one Spanish surnamed individual). Unfortunately, I was not able to get additional information, such as their professional specialties, education, etc., about these administrators. But my preliminary observations suggest that the administrative set up at NIMH is essentially a white, male-dominated club.

B. The Initial Review Committee

After a proposal has been submitted and assigned to a program unit, the administrator will send the proposal to a member of the Executive Review Committee. According to a NIMH publication (DHEW, 1976, p. 9):

> Initial review groups are panels of the best qualified, primarily non-government consultants chosen for their expertise in a given field.... Initial Review Groups review, evaluate, and rate research grant applications. Each committee has between 10 and 15 members.

In an essay on research grants, Greenberg (1977) reached a different assessment of the peer review process. He states (p. A 18):

> Peer review, a process virtually unknown outside the scientific community, is the sacrosanct ritual of the grant business, involving, as it does, panels of specialists, mainly from universities, to grade the applicants and their proposed research projects. Sensible on the face of it, and routinely touted as instilling a competitive spirit into research, the system, however, is frequently assailed as an invitation to backscratching and a boon to scientific conversation. Critics contend, for example, that reviewers with their own scientific regulations to protect are not likely to be sympathetic to mavericks proposing research that does not harmonize with their own scientific perceptions; peer review is too inbred....

This is an excellent commentary on the federal research funding system.

There is no question that the Review Committee is the key element in the funding process. What is the profile of these people? I have analyzed the data on all NIMH review committees; that is, research and training, for I assume that the profile will be the same regardless of the focus of program units. One can argue that the two orientations (training and research) reinforce each other. I identified 28 initial review committees, 14 research and 14 training, and this number does not include the National Advisory Mental Health Council, a group of 12 distinguished persons (scientists, educators, and lay citizens) who review the recommendations of the Initial Review Group (DHEW, 1976, p. 11). Very seldom does this council reverse the decisions of the Initial Review Group so it is this latter committee which will be the focus of our analysis.

As of July 1, 1977, there were 310 persons on the NIMH review committees, although the number authorized was 363 (DHEW, 1977). With respect to disciplines, 34.8 percent were psychologists, 26 percent were psychiatrists, and 12 percent were

sociologists (see Table III). What is interesting to note is that 60 percent of the members on the NIMH review committees were either psychologists or psychiatrists. These committees were dominated by white males; that is, 71 percent or 220 were men and 90 or 29 percent were women. I estimated that there were 32 Blacks on these committees, representing 10.3 percent of the total (see Table IV). Of the Blacks on the committees, 40.6 percent were women and 59.4 percent were men. With respect to disciplines, 56.3 percent of the Blacks were either psychologists or psychiatrists. These data suggest that the NIMH review committees are dominated by white male psychologists and psychiatrists.

The regional representation on these committees is not even; for example, the East Coast is over-represented; that is, 29 percent of the members lived on the East Coast. In fact, almost half of the members reside on either the East or West Coast (see Table V). Our data show that 50 percent of the committee members live in the following six states: New York, California, Massachusetts, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Maryland (see Table VI). It should be noted that members on these committees

TABLE III

THE DISCIPLINES OF PERSONS ON
NIMH REVIEW COMMITTEES - 1977

Disciplines	N	Percentage
Psychology	108	34.8%
Psychiatry	79	25.5%
Sociology	38	12.2%
Social Sciences	25	8.1%
Medical Sciences	20	6.4%
Nursing	20	6.4%
Social Work	20	6.4%
Total	310	99.8%

Source: U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, HRA, HSA, CDC, ADAMHA, Public Advisory Committees: Authority Structure Function Members (Washington, D. C.: DHEW Publication HRA 77-601, July 1, 1977), pp. 52-83.

TABLE IV

PROFILE OF BLACKS ON
NIMH REVIEW COMMITTEE - 1977

Total Size of Review Committee	310
Estimated Number of Black	32
Percent of Committee Black	10.3%

	N	Percent
Black Male	19	59.4
Black Female	13	40.6
Total	32	100.0

Disciplines of Black Members

	N	Percent
Psychology	11	34.4
Psychiatry	7	21.9
Social Work	3	09.4
Sociology	3	09.4
Nursing	2	06.2
Political Science	1	03.1
Medical Science	2	06.2
Others	3	09.4
Total	32	100.0

Source: U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, HRA, HSA, CDC, ADAMHA Public Advisory Committees: Authority Structure Function Members (Washington, D. C.: DHEW Publication HRA 77-601, July 1, 1977), pp. 52-83.

TABLE V

REGIONAL REPRESENTATION ON
NIMH REVIEW COMMITTEES
1977

	N	Percent
South	51	17
East Coast	89	29
West Coast	48	16
Midwest	60	19
Mountain	26	08
New England	32	10
Others*	4	1
Total	310	100

*Others refer to Canada, Puerto Rica, etc.

Source: U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, HRA, HSA, CDC, ADAMHA Public Advisory Committees: Authority Structure Function Members (Washington, D. C.: DHEW Publication No. HRA 77-60, July 1, 1977), pp. 52-83.

TABLE VI

THE 16 LEADING STATES WITH REPRESENTATION ON NIMH REVIEW COMMITTEES - 1977

State	N	Percent	Cumulative Percent
New York	44	14.2	14.2
California	35	11.3	25.5
Massachusetts	22	7.1	32.6
Colorado	16	5.2	37.8
Illinois	14	4.5	42.3
Pennsylvania	13	4.2	46.5
Maryland	13	4.2	50.7
North Carolina	10	3.2	53.9
Florida	9	2.9	56.8
Michigan	9	2.9	59.7
District of Columbia	8	2.3	62.0
Minnesota	8	2.7	64.3
Connecticut	8	2.3	66.6
Texas	8	2.3	68.9
Missouri	7	2.2	71.1
New Jersey	7	2.2	73.3
Total	310		

Source: U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, HRA, HSA, CDC, ADAMHA Public Advisory Committees: Authority Structure Function Members (Washington, D. C.: DHEW Publication No. HRA 77-60, July 1, 1977), pp. 52-83.

were affiliated with a range of colleges and universities. Table VII shows the leading institutional affiliations of committee members. Among Black colleges and universities, Howard University had the highest number of representatives. Very few representatives were associated with Black colleges and universities. Of the 310 committee members, only 58 or 18.7 percent were affiliated with nonuniversity organizations. In other words, 81.3 percent of the members on NIMH review committees were associated with colleges and universities.

C. The Principal Investigators

When one looks specifically at who gets the funds, one begins to see the relationship between committee structure and who is funded. For example, in 1975, NIMH awarded 1,064 research grants, and psychologists accounted for 50 percent of the awards and 42 percent of the funds (see Table VIII). In fact, psychologists and psychiatrists received 65 percent of the research awards and 66 percent of the funds. As one may recall, 60 percent of the members on the NIMH review committees were either psychologists or psychiatrists (see Table II).

TABLE VII

THE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF FACULTY AND STAFF MEMBERS ON NIMH REVIEW COMMITTEES-1977

University of California, Los Angeles

Boston University

University of Michigan

University of Minnesota

University of Texas

University of Wisconsin

Columbia University

Harvard University

University of Washington

City College of New York

Duke University

Howard University

University of Chicago

University of Colorado

University of North Carolina

Yale University

Source: U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, HRA, HSA, CDC, ADAMHA Public Advisory Committees: Authority Structure Function Members (Washington, D. C.: DHEW Publication No. HRA 77-60, July 1, 1977), pp. 52-83.

TABLE VIII

NIMH RESEARCH AWARDS BY DISCIPLINE OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS, FY 1975

	Number of Awards		Value of Awards (Amount in Millions)	
Disciplines	N	%	Amount	%
Psychology	526	50	$62.7	42
Psychiatry	164	15	14.8	24
Biological and Medical Sciences	153	14	7.8	12
Social Sciences	159	15	9.1	14
Others	62	6	4.7	8
Total	1,064	100	$62.7	100

Source: U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, National Institute of Mental Health Research Support Programs and Activities (Rockville, Maryland: DHEW Publication ADA 76-322, 1976), p. 1.

Moreover, the data show that colleges and universities, including other schools, accounted for 81 percent of the awards and 73 percent of research funds in the mental health field (see Table IX). Earlier, I stated that 81.3 percent of the members on NIMH review committees were affiliated with universities and colleges.

It is very difficult, if not impossible, to get information on the race of principal investigators. In a special report for the National Mental Health Advisory Council, Ralph (1974) tried to get such information. He concluded (p. 9):

> ...there is a small number of research grants -- either absolutely or relatively -- being awarded to minority group members.

I suspect this is true. Analyzing a range of minority research projects, Robinson (1971) reached a similar conclusion. He conducted a study of 522 minority research projects funded by the federal government. He found that 48 percent of these projects used Black subjects. Out of the 522 projects, 388 (70.3 percent) were carried out at colleges and universities, but only 18 projects (3 percent) involved traditionally Black colleges and universities (Robinson, 1971, p. 3). In another

TABLE IX

NIMH RESEARCH GRANT AWARDS BY TYPE OF INSTITUTIONS, FY 1975

	Number of Awards		Value of Awards (Amount in Millions)	
	N	%	Amount	%
Colleges, Universities, and Other Schools	858	81	$45.6	73
Independent Organizations	97	9	8.7	14
Hospitals and Clinics	88	8	6.9	11
Other Institutions	21	2	1.5	2
Total	1,064	100	$62.7	100

Source: U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, National Institute of Mental Health Research Support Programs and Activities (Rockville, Maryland: DHEW Publication ADA 76-322, 1976), p. 8.

article, Gary (1975) concluded that the federal government, including NIMH, has not supported research at Black colleges and universities even though the institutions have the capabilities for developing quality research programs. There has been at least one attempt to systematically examine research grants concerned with minorities from a content perspective (Ralph, 1974). This has been rather difficult to do. Nonetheless, it is generally believed and accepted by most Black scholars that research on the Black community and the Black family, in particular, had tended to focus on pathology or weaknesses of such families rather than on their strengths. According to Ralph (1974, p. 17):

> Over half of the research conducted by NIMH pertaining to minority groups has been of the deficit or pathological model.... In the deficit model, people are seen as both the cause and the source of their illness. The treatment is always in the form of remediation in an attempt to bring the group up to the norm of the majority group. It is a perspective in which the external environment is not accounted for as having any significant influence.

Other Blacks have been very critical of funded research on the Black family (Billingsley, 1970; Gordon, 1973; Wilcox, 1970; Gary, 1974; and Ladner, 1973). Most of the funded research on the Black

family is still under the control of white scientists. The major criticism of this research includes the following: (1) Tendency to focus on pathology rather than strengths, (2) oversimplified reasoning from group (statistical aggregates) to individuals, (3) tendency to assume the uniformity of the Black experience, (4) a propensity to focus primarily on lowest income groups of Black subjects, (5) a tendency to concentrate on captive subjects (prisoners, mental patients, school children), (6) poor sampling and research design, (7) inappropriate and unreliable instruments, (8) tendency to underemphasize cultural factors or denial of the importance of culture in influencing behavioral patterns in the Black community, (9) a reluctance to treat racism as an important variable, (1) biased perspective given by the socialization of the researcher, (11) inadequate models and theoretical assumptions, and (12) a tendency to ask the wrong research questions.

Discussion of these problems in detail is beyond the scope of this paper. However, Black scientists must take a greater or larger responsibility for research problems which have a special reference to

the development of our communities. We must develop our own research agenda. For too long, white scientists have developed the research agenda for the Black community and often their research concerns have not served the best interests of the Black community.

Given the nature or structure of the review process and the conventional wisdom with a deficit perspective, it is not surprising that Black researchers experienced a high rejection rate. Although not related specifically to Black researchers, the major reasons why research grant applications are turned down include the following (Lish, 1971; Allen, 1960; Zallen and Zallen, 1976):

(1) The problem is not of sufficient importance or is unlikely to produce any new or useful information.

(2) The proposed research is based on a hypothesis that rests on insufficient evidence, is doubtful or is unsound.

(3) The problem is more complex than the investigator appears to realize.

(4) The research as proposed is overly involved with too many elements under simultaneous investigation.

(5) The description of the nature of the research and of its significance leaves the proposal nebulous and diffuse and without a clear research aim.

(6) The proposed tests or methods or scientific procedures are unsuited to the stated objectives.

(7) The description of the approach is too nebulous, diffuse, and lacking in clarity to permit adequate evaluation.

(8) The overall design of the study has not been carefully thought out.

(9) The statistical aspects of the approach have not been given sufficient consideration.

(10) Controls are either inadequately conceived or inadequately described.

(11) The investigator does not have adequate experience or training in research.

(12) The investigator appears to be unfamiliar with recent pertinent literature or methods.

(13) The investigator's previously published work in the field does not inspire confidence.

(14) The investigator proposes to rely too heavily on insufficiently experienced associates.

(15) The requirements for equipment or personnel are unrealistic.

(16) It appears that other responsibilities would prevent devotion of sufficient time and attention to this research.

It is very important for Black scientists and practitioners to submit research proposals. Believe me, the money is there. Research is a very competitive process, but one can get funded in spite of the politics. The Policy Grants Directory (1977, pp. 15-17) has the following suggestions for potential applicants for grants:

(1) Be informed about the agencies to whom you are applying, and be sure to target the proposal to the right place.

(2) Make informal initial inquiries first before submitting a formal proposal.

(3) Be specific about your objectives and methods.

(4) Do not assume your proposal will be cut. Do not anticipate rejection, but think positively.

(5) Check the grammar, punctuation, etc. Pay attention to the esthetics of the presentation regarding how it looks.

(6) Look over the previous grant award announcements from the agency to see what they have actually funded, and to determine the agency's current priorities.

(7) Pay attention to specific procedures and follow the guidelines of the particular agency. Each foundation has its own preference as to how it wants to be approached.

(8) Try to make your grant request fall within the average range of awards of that agency.

(9) Write your proposal as one professional writing to another.

(10) Consider the ends and objectives of the particular grant program.

(11) Carefully justify all costs included.

(12) Pay special attention to qualifications of the investigator.

(13) Avoid citing people who may give you especially bad reviews.

(14) Try to find out what the agency's review procedure will be in terms of its evaluation of your proposal.

(15) Watch out for jargon that reviewers can't understand.

(16) Set up a plan of operation for yourself and follow it through. Be systematic in your approach.

(17) Junior investigators should start small. A rule of thumb is to ask for less than $10,000 for your first grant. A small award gives you good experience and a reputation which will help in getting larger funding. You have to establish a track record.

(18) Projects that require large-scale support (several hundred thousand dollars) or that need to be supported over a long period tend to be rejected.

(19) Research involving advanced mathematical or quantitative techniques receives relatively higher priority in most of the social sciences.

(20) Don't think just of the large, commonly-used agencies such as SSRC, Russell Sage, Ford, etc. Apply also to less well-known sources where the ratio of applications to available money may be much more favorable.

(21) Don't think just of "getting" the grant. Also, do a good job after you get a grant of any kind in terms of reporting fully, fulfilling deadlines, etc. This is very important for future grants.

(22) Special care should be taken in writing the abstract since most of the committee members read only the abstract.

(23) Good review of the literature is very important.

(24) Remember that scientists have particular methodological biases depending on their training. The more perfectly the design conforms to the biases of the review committee members, the higher the likelihood that it will be evaluated positively.

(25) Check to see that the proposal is integrated across its sections.

(26) Don't forget to explain significance to the field of your project.

(27) Proposals are read hastily. Therefore, use plenty of headings, etc., to signal readers to critically important parts of the proposal.

(28) Probably the most common error is to paint the picture in too grandiose terms or too general terms.

(29) Don't submit extremely lengthy bibliographies. Instead, concentrate on evaluating the contributions of the references you do cite.

(30) It is a red flag to reviewers if the writer says that this is a new idea and that nothing has been written that bears on the problem. This is very rarely the true case. Instead, find some kind of research at least touching on the problem, and indicate how it falls short.

IV. Needs Assessment

In Black family research, one can identify critical needs in at least three major areas: (1) theoretical or conceptual concerns, (b) manpower and training, and (c) research priorities.

A. Theoretical Concerns

In general, social and behavioral science researchers have tended to view Black communities as well as Black families from a monolithic perspective. There is diversity within Black communities like other communities (Green, 1970). One can see this diversity with respect to the following:

(1) The structure of Black neighborhoods.

(2) The relative significance of voluntary association in various communities.

(3) The various types of families. Billingsley (1968) identified twelve types.

(4) The role of traditional Black values, which can be examined in terms of intensity, duration, extensiveness, etc.

(5) The economic structure of Black communities.

(6) The political styles, structures and behavior.

(7) Social class differences and how social class influences other aspects of Black communities.

(8) Leadership behavior and styles.

(9) Historical factors which relate to our background. For example, Black Americans came primarily from West Africa, which had and continues to have diversified linguistic, religious, stratification and political systems. Some Blacks can trace their background to American Indians, others to West Indians; some Blacks were never slaves, and some were skilled craftsmen and landowners. Finally, it should be noted that the slave experience for Black America was also diversified because of the variety of settings in which it was practiced (small family farms vs large plantations, rural vs urban, south vs north, house slaves vs field slaves).

These data point to the fact that Black people are diversified, but we do have a common history and culture.

Since many researchers assume a uniform Black experience, they are caught in a situation where they tend to compare Black and white, that is, the comparative paradigm. Often, the researcher ends by comparing middle-class white families with low

income Blacks and draws all kinds of wrong conclusions. Several analytical models have been developed to explain Black-white relations or differences and/or behavior in the Black community. It should be noted, however, that social and behavioral scientists have spent more time developing conceptual schemes around Black-white relationships rather than considering Black-Black interaction. In other words, conceptual schemes have been derived to assist in finding out the differences between Black and white families. One consequence of this approach is that little attention has been focused on understanding differences within our communities so that appropriate strategies can be developed for unification against the common enemy, white racism.

I shall briefly identify several analytical models or conceptual schemes used in studying Black communities including Black families (Staples, 1976; Solomon, 1977; Gary, 1974). They are:

(1) System theory (Billingsley, 1968; Solomon, 1976; Blackwell, 1975).

(2) Biological model, sometimes called genetic inferiority. Thomas and Sillen, 1972; Hirsch, 1973; Malina, 1974; Jensen, 1969; Solomon, 1976; Welsing, 1974.

(3) Social pathology, sometimes called the culture of poverty (Staples, 1976; Valentine, 1968; Ryan, 1971).

(4) Personal deviation (Allport, 1954; Sherif, 1958; Kovey, 1970; Taifel, 1973; Stein, 1966).

(5) Structural functionalism (Staples, 1976; Parsons, 1966; Liebow, 1966; Rainwater, 1970; Rodman, 1963; Yinger, 1969).

(6) Cultural pluralism (Staples, 1976; Blauner, 1972; Zeitlin, 1968; Staples, 1972; Nobeles, 1972; Herskovitz, 1958; Hill, 1972; and Ladner, 1971).

(7) Assimilation (Solomon, 1976; Gordon, 1964; Greer, 1974; Staples, 1976).

(8) Amalgamation (Solomon, 1976; Murray, 1971; Greer, 1974).

(9) Internal colonialism (Carmichael and Hamilton, 1967; Cruse, 1962; Blauner, 1972; Tabb, 1970; and Allen, 1969).

This list of analytical models of the Black experience is incomplete. I do not plan to discuss these models. Moreover, they are not mutually exclusive. Although many theories have been advanced to explain Black-white relationships, there is a need for us to develop more meaningful conceptual schemes. Conceptual clarity is a major need in Black family research.

B. Manpower and Training

I have shown that social research, including family research, is a major business enterprise in

the United States and that the major disciplines receiving federal support for research are psychology, psychiatry and, to some extent, sociology. An important question is how many Blacks are there with terminal or professional degrees in these fields. The answer is that Blacks constitute less than two percent of the professionals in these fields (Gary, 1976).

It is difficult to assess Black manpower in the social and behavioral sciences. Of the 95,103 social workers, it is estimated that 10,372 are Black, which is 10 percent of the total social workers in 1974 (Williams, et al., 1977). A membership survey conducted by the National Association of Social Workers in 1975 reported that 7.6 percent of 35,630 respondents were Black (NASW, 1975). Apparently, Black social workers have a larger proportional representation than any other Black social and behavioral science groups in this country. Based on a 1974 American Psychological Association survey, there were 287 Blacks (190 males and 97 females) with Ph.D.'s in psychology, representing 1.40 percent of respondents for a total of 20,443 (Williams, et al., 1977). The

Black psychiatrists of America are conducting a systematic survey of Black psychiatrists in the U.S. It is estimated that there are 500 Black psychiatrists (400 males and 100 females). There are about 17,000 psychiatrists in this country (Williams, et al., 1977). Data on nursing and sociology are very limited. Finman (1975) reported that 47 Black nurses had Ph.D.'s. It is estimated that there are 275 Blacks with Ph.D's in sociology.

These data clearly suggest that Blacks are under-represented in the disciplines which receive large scale funding for family research. In addition, even within these disciplines, many Blacks do not follow research careers. Therefore, these data would suggest that one major problem facing the Black community is how to get more Black students interested in research careers in the major social and behavioral science disciplines. Gary (1975, 1976) had discussed this problem and suggested that more emphasis must be placed on analytical courses in undergraduate programs, especially at Black colleges and universities.

C. Research

There are important research areas which have

been neglected by both white and Black family researchers. Given the current state of problems confronting the Black community, I suggest the following research questions:

(1) What are the effects of unemployment on the Black family?

(2) How has violence affected the Black family?

(3) What impact does television have on our children?

(4) What impact does the institutional warehouse have on family functioning in the Black community?

(5) What do we really know about the Black middle-class family?

(6) What do we know about political socialization in the Black community?

(7) What do we know about economic socialization in the Black community?

(8) How do we promote discipline and respect in our communities?

(9) What are the consequences for the Black family in reference to the significant increase in the number of "simple" people?

(10) What is the nature of family health practices?

(11) What have been the positive mental health aspects of social network systems in the Black community?

(12) What is the correlation between the values established in peer groups and those established in the family?

(13) What are the unique interpersonal dynamics in all Black organizations?

(14) Is the rise in drug usage in the Black community directly related to the decline of peer groups and gangs?

(15) Is there a relationship between the rise in crime and violence among the 18 to 25-year-old group in the Black community and the declining influence of the social network apparatus?

(16) Has the tolerance level of stress and ambiguity been directly affected by the dispersion of gang peer groups and the declining influence of the church?

(17) What has been the impact of the women's movement on male/female interaction in the Black community?

(18) What is the relative effectiveness of various treatment modalities, given the nature of interpersonal relations in the Black community?

V. New Concepts and Issues

A. Protection of Human Subjects

In general, Blacks and others have been used as "guinea pigs" in both biomedical and social and behavioral science research. What comes to mind is the now famous Tuskegee Syphilis Study, the testing and experimentation of birth control pills on poor and Black women, experimentation with various drugs on our people in mental hospitals and prisons, and these social surveys which label whole communities. This list is incomplete. We must insist that the rights of human subjects be

protected even when it makes our own research more difficult.

B. Family or Social Indicators

In the future, greater emphasis must be placed on social indicator research. A specific question is, "How do we know whether or not our community is 'better off' in 1977 than it was in 1970?" We must develop measures of the well-being of the community which deal with (a) physical health, (b) psychological health, and (c) social health. We can no longer just add programs in the Black community without having some notion of the impact of these programs. In other words, research and services are both necessary elements in our attempt to provide quality services for our people.

C. Natural Setting Focus

In the massive study entitled "Toward a National Policy for Children and Families" (National Academy of Sciences, 1976), it was suggested that there is a need to develop more studies of children in natural settings. Too much of our research on Black children and families has tended to be based on a narrow conception of the child's or the family's environment. By broadening the research model for

children and family studies, the report suggests that we can have a greater impact on public policy issues (p. 101).

D. Social Policy and Social Networks

In their book, Support Systems and Mutual Help, Caplan and Killilea (1976, p. 32) suggest more attention should be given to research which helps to promote "the intactness, integration and mutuality of extended families." They argue for the following principles for organizing services for families, given the pluralistic nature of our society:

(1) Housing programs should provide residential accommodations so that old people and their families can choose to live in the same household or in the immediate vicinity.

(2) Services should be avoided, wherever possible, segregating and isolating family members.

(3) We should involve the total family unit in all crisis intervention. Professional and nonprofessional caregivers should exploit every opportunity for convening family groups and facilitating the organization of family action projects.

(4) The Census Bureau should alter its definition of a family from kin living in the same residential household to kin who interact frequently and are bound together by positive concern.

E. Toward A Comparative Research Paradigm Within Black Communities

We must devote more effort to helping to

destroy the assumed superiority of the comparative research model in social and behavioral science research in this country where Blacks are always compared to whites. Black scientists must build comparative research paradigms within Black communities. As suggested earlier, we are a diversified people. More research emphases should be placed on understanding these differences within our communities so that approaches and strategies can be developed for promoting more cooperation and concerns for each other.

VI. Conclusion

In this paper, I tried to clarify some of the issues and problems related to Black family research in this country. First, I discussed the fact that research, including family issues, is a major industry in the United States, but Black professionals are not playing significant roles as recipients of grants from the federal government. In addition, Blacks are not adequately represented in those disciplines -- psychology, psychiatry, or sociology that receive the greatest share of research support. I documented the fact that the funding process at the federal level is dominated by white males who control the administrative positions, as well as the initial review committees.

Some consideration was given to why research proposals are rejected and suggestions were made for improving one's chance of getting one's project funded. Moreover, our needs assessment included a discussion of theoretical concerns and the identification of neglected areas for research. I concluded with some suggestions for future directions in family research in reference to the protection of human subjects, the significance of family or social indicator research, the needs for studies of children and families in natural settings, the development of social policies which are reflective of our pluralistic society, and the need to develop a comparative approach to family research within the context of Black communities.

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